

# In the shade

Vol. 38, No. 6  
March, 2015



NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER



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# Growing Texas

Urban and Community Forestry Workshop

## April 30th 2015

9:30 am - 3:30 pm

San Marcos City Park Recreation Hall  
170 Charles Austin Drive, San Marcos, TX 78666



Registration (includes lunch) at:  
[Http://www.sa-aa.com-event-1835101](http://www.sa-aa.com-event-1835101)

Certified Forester (3.5)  
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ISA CEU's (4.5)



## ITCC, with Workshops, Arbor Fair & Expo March 20-22, Tampa

In addition to the competition with the world's best climbers, there will be hands-on workshops with industry leaders as well as the Arbor Fair and Expo.

Workshops will cover pruning, safety, diagnostics, cabling, and appraisal. The Arbor Fair will showcase the profession and offer a fun climb and other kids' activities. The Expo is an outdoor trade show that will give you the chance to try out the latest industry equipment. Details and workshop registration at: <http://www.isa-arbor.com/events/treeclimbingchampionships/>

## ISA International Conference & Trade Show August 8-12, Orlando

The ISA Annual International Conference and Trade Show will bring you the same great educational and networking opportunities as it has for more than 90 years. Events include:

- Tree Academy Workshops
- Educational Sessions
- Indoor Trade Show
- Climbers' Corner on the Trade Show floor

Plan now to attend by reserving your room at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center. Get the latest updates on educational opportunities, registration and more at <http://www.isa-arbor.com/events/conference/index.aspx>



Where the Trees  
Meet the Seas  
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## Podcast Series Wants YOU!

*Tree Workers' Tips, Tricks & Troubles* is the first ISA podcast series in which the content is determined by you, the arborist. ISA members and credential holders around the world are invited to share their experiences while on the job.



Whether it's a problem with a pest invading your territory, a tip for evading poison ivy, or a trick that has made your work easier or

safer, this podcast series wants to hear about it!

To make this podcast real-world savvy, we encourage you to send ISA videos from the field. They can't do this without you! Using your smartphone, take a video of a work situation or practice that you would like to share with other arborists and send it to Bill Yauch at ISA headquarters ([byauch@isa-arbor.com](mailto:byauch@isa-arbor.com)). The video must be less than five minutes long and should be shot horizontally. Please include a brief description of the video in your email to help staff determine if they can use your material to create content for the podcast. Questions? Email Bill Yauch. If your video is selected, you will be contacted when the podcast is ready for release.

## ON THE COVER

Our cover photo was taken by Eric Siegmund of Midland. As freezing rain destroyed the desert willow in his back yard, he took photos and posted them on his blog: <http://www.eric siegmund.com/fireant/2015/01/150102-icestorm.html> See more about the West Texas ice storm on page 9.

## In the Shade

is published six times a year  
by the Texas Chapter,  
International Society  
of Arboriculture.

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# Register for Texas Tree Climbing Championship 2015

by Kevin Bassett, TTCC Chair

The TTCC returns to Fort Worth's Trinity Park in 2015! This great venue for tree climbing has hosted our championship many times since the event first started in 1983. It was to be the site of the 2016 ITCC until the ISA conference and the ITCC separated this year. The trees are of international event quality, and the TTCC team is excited to use a few of these great bur oaks for the TTCC competition. Mark your calendars now and plan to come and join in the event. The competition will take place on June 12 and 13, 2015.

Additionally, the TTCC committee has put together an excellent all-day educational program for Thursday, June 11. This seminar is aimed at those who work in the field: climbing, pruning, and removing trees. The TTCC committee strives to bring top-level industry leaders to present this seminar, and this

year is no exception. I am proud to announce that we have secured the services of North American Training Solutions. This company is well known within the industry as a top source for training in forestry and arboriculture. Scott Prophett and his crew of experienced trainers will present a valuable program covering the subjects of rigging and aerial rescue.

Rigging to safely remove trees and limbs is a necessary task which is common in day-to-day tree care operations. At the seminar you can expect to learn time- and effort-saving "tricks of the trade" which will make your jobsites safer and more efficient, which will in turn add to your bottom line. Rescue training will also give you new ideas and techniques, as we work in one of the most dangerous occupations. With the proliferation of SRT climbing systems, an aerial rescue refresher is prob-

ably needed. Rescue of a victim using this climbing technique is a bit different from the normal DdRT climbing systems we all have grown up with. It gives a crew a lot of confidence to know that their members are able to help them to safety should an incident in the tree occur, regardless of climbing system.

In my mind, any training which adds to a "safety first" mindset is sorely needed. As an industry, we seem to have a growing need to improve our accident statistics, so when you're paying that horrendous insurance bill, think about what we all need to do to make our jobs safer. Having fewer accidents will in turn lead to paying less for insurance. If we spill less blood, we'll save more money.

Register online for the seminar and the TTCC at [www.isatexas.com](http://www.isatexas.com). If you are unable to register online, please call me at 972-877-0358, and we will arrange to mail the forms to you.

For those of you who would like to be involved in the judge and technician aspects of the event, please contact Head Judge Guy LeBlanc at 512-301-8700. This event not only exists to determine a Texas Chapter Climbing Champion to send to the ITCC, but also seeks to educate and promote the art and science of arboriculture among the membership and the general public as well. I look forward to seeing you there when we once again "Gather at the River." ■

## 2015 TEXAS TREE CLIMBING CHAMPIONSHIP

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June 11th– June 13th, 2015



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**Winner will represent the Texas Chapter at the 2016 International Competition to be held right here in our home state!**

**Educational Workshop: Thursday, June 11th, 2015:**

Registration Fee: \$125

Registration Deadline: June 1st, 2015

Workshop CEU's: 6 CEU's

**YOU MUST BE REGISTERED AND PAID FOR TO ATTEND.**

**Preliminary Events: Friday, June 12th, 2015:**

Registration Fee (ISA Members): \$75

Registration Fee (Non-ISA Members): \$115

Registration Deadline: June 5th, 2015

**Master's Challenge: Saturday, June 13th, 2015**

**Kids & Adult Recreational Climb Open from 8:00-12:00**

## PLANTING/PRUNING WORKSHOP GETS TOP GRADES FROM STUDENTS

by Zaina Gates, East Texas Regional Urban Forester,  
Texas A&M Forest Service

The Jacksonville Tree Planting/Pruning workshop in February was a hit. We limited the class to 40 participants, and we had 39 register. The students came from Athens, Palestine, Rusk, Nacogdoches, Jacksonville, and Tyler. The weather could not have been better for an outdoor day of hands-on learning and fun. The day started off brisk and cloudy, as it should during tree planting/pruning season, but ended in beautiful sunshine.

The event took place at the Ruth Bowling Nichols Arboretum, located behind and managed by the Jacksonville Texas A&M Forest Service district office. It was sponsored by Joe Smith Farms, who donated two trees for the planting demo. We rotated the students through three stations: tree planting, young tree pruning, and mature tree pruning. The tree planting station, taught by TFS urban forester Matt Weaver, covered techniques to help increase survivability and improve root establishment, such as root washing and root trimming. A red maple was added to the arboretum during the demo.

The young tree pruning station, taught by TFS urban forester Zaina Gates and TFS district forester Jason Ellis, covered methods to train young trees for structural stability and good form. Students brought their pruning shears, loppers, and pruning saws and practiced proper cuts and the 3-step pruning method on a few young trees along the arboretum trails.

The mature tree pruning station, taught by TFS urban forester Paul Johnson, covered reasons for and proper approaches to pruning mature trees, as well as safety and equipment.

Comments from the participants were, "I learned more today than at all of the seminars and workshops I have ever attended," "I have been inspired to go home and attack long neglected oak trees, and the workshop saved me from making some serious mistakes," and "Presenters were an excellent and fabulous team." They rated all of the stations as "very informative," and said we should do it again!



Jason Ellis demonstrates the 3-cut method.

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**Professional Division: 1<sup>st</sup> place:**  
Bio Landscape and Maintenance. Their winning time of 14 min., 28 sec. shattered their old mark of 17 minutes.

# 8TH ANNUAL HOUSTON TREE PLANTING COMPETITION

The Greater Houston 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Tree Planting Competition February 7 went very well. Sixteen teams planted 1,600 trees – very cool. Special thanks to Mark Kroeze and his San Antonio team and Hannah Cruce for filling in as judges.

– Mickey Merritt

Coca Cola bear was there. He's way in the back.



**Amateur Division:**  
Coca Cola had four teams and won 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.  
Times were:  
47'48"  
53'21"  
63'07"



**Professional Division: 2<sup>nd</sup> place:**  
Davey Tree Expert Company.  
Time: 47'12"



**Student Division:**  
MacArthur High School had two teams. Times were:  
80'17" and 119'42"



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# LEGISLATIVE ALERT!

by Terry Kirkland, Chair of the ISAT Legislative committee

There have been two bills introduced so far this legislative session that may be of concern to ISAT members:

**HB1442** (<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/84R/billtext/html/HB01442I.htm>)

and **HB1472** (<http://www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/84R/billtext/html/HB01472I.htm>)

introduced by Representative Paul Workman. I will attempt to lay out the points that may be of concern to ISAT membership, and if you have a concern please contact your state representatives and voice your opinion.

## HB1442

- Allows property owners to remove vegetation that they deem a fire hazard with little or no restrictions to size or species or a firewise assessment by a firewise trained person.
- Doesn't limit tree removal to firewise buffers
- Exempts ordinances, rules and regulations in a municipality, county or political subdivision
- Focuses on cedar, salt cedar and mesquite removal
- There may be some incorrect expectations by some legislators of conserving water by removing/clear cutting cedar

## HB1472

- Allows the attorney-general the authority to sue a city on behalf of a developer
- Increases the risk cities take when they deny a developer's grandfathering claim
- May inhibit municipalities from enforcing tree ordinances due to the fear of litigation

This alert is meant to inform the ISAT membership as to items that may be of concern to them during the current legislative session. I will continue to monitor all bills as they pertain to trees and or arborists. Feel free to contact me about any legislative matter you may have concern about. [tkirk99@yahoo.com](mailto:tkirk99@yahoo.com)



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# Parts of West Texas Hit by **ICE STORMS**

by James Tuttle

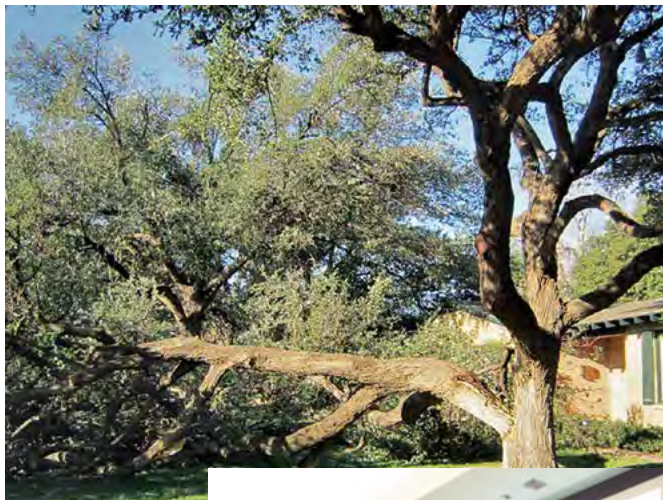
The first week of January, parts of West Texas were hit with the worst ice storm the area had ever experienced. The damage was from a line about half way between Lubbock and Midland south to Alpine. The damage was primarily in live oaks and pines.

Many arborists have said, perhaps only to themselves, “Ice is hard on trees, but, dang, it is good for business.” As happens with many storms, many tree companies—some legitimate, some not—descended on the area. For a couple of weeks, it seemed that everyone with a pickup and trailer bought a chain-saw and went into the tree business. Most are gone now.

Tree Loving Care went from pretty slow to overwhelmed in about four hours and will be working on the aftereffects of the storm for months. We are still sending crews from Lubbock to the Permian Basin and Alpine.

For having little experience with storms of this magnitude, the cities in the area did a pretty good job of handling the debris. There have been many lessons learned.

In Midland, shortly after the storm, Tree Keepers put on a well-attended workshop called After the Storm—Tree Care 911 to inform the public about what they needed to do next. It was a round table type of format with Oscar Mestas, TFS Urban Forester from El Paso; James Tuttle and Mark Walters, local arborists; Debbie Frost, retired TAMU Hort Agent; and Laurie Williams, director of Midland Parks, as the panel members.



Above: ice storm took out a large branch on this live oak.



Right: Tree Care 911 panelists share knowledge.

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## Photos show tree destruction by **FREEZING RAIN**



Midland resident Eric Siegmund lost a beautiful desert willow in the January ice storm. Initially the tree appeared okay, but it didn't survive the next day's freezing rain. As branches broke and the tree went from bad to worse to unsalvageable, Eric took photos and posted them on his blog. See the whole sad story at:

<http://www.eric siegmund.com/fireant/2015/01/150102-icestorm.html>





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## Arborists Volunteer at the Warrior & Family Support Center

by David M. Vaughan, Certified Arborist, Etter Tree Care

Giving time, advice, and work to a worthy cause is one of the best ways you have for increasing your commercial work load and bottom line. In the September newsletter we looked at a project done through the San Antonio Arborist Association at a small community cemetery. In this issue I would like to cover a volunteer project that is a company endeavor.

We now do most of the tree care for the Warrior and Family Support Center (WFSC). Many of our country's wounded warriors are sent to San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) for treatment and recovery. They are often here for more than 12 months. These warriors need family involvement to help with their recovery. So the military initially provided three acres of land and our community donated the funds and built a facility to provide the warriors and their families a place just for them to be together as a family. We are talking serious money: \$5.8 million to build a 12,500-square-foot facility and adjoining garden. About \$4 million to build a six-acre park with walking/running trails, an amphitheater, and playgrounds for the kids. There are shade structures with misting systems to keep burn victims comfortable. Everything was built with the wounded warrior in mind.

They keep improving the park and just completed a soccer field/volleyball court with artificial turf. The volleyball net is only about four feet tall so you can play without prosthetic legs or you have to sit down. And if you are feeling sorry for the guys without legs, get ready to have a volleyball face spike because the games are serious and very competitive. Legs get in the way and slow you down.



Luis Carrillo on ground and Hector Narvaez in tree installing a bolt and cable in a split hackberry in Freedom Park at the Warrior and Family Support Service Facilities.

Monetary donations to WFSC can be made online at [ReturningHeroesHome.org](http://ReturningHeroesHome.org) or 210-916-8367.

San Antonio is a military town. Everything in the family center is donated by the community. There is a commercial kitchen that is completely manned by volunteers. The pantries are full. The two commercial size refrigerators are full. The walk-in freezer is full. The gardens supply herbs and fresh fruit in season. The families and warriors can get a prepared meal almost anytime or they can prepare what they want anytime.

There is a state of the art computer lab and business center, all donated. There is a TV entertainment media room with many large screen TVs (I'm guessing 100-inch screens), each with two leather home video chairs. All with video games, computer access, movie access, and a large DVD library with the most current movies available. All donated by our community. It is a one-of-a-kind facility, the only one in the US. The only one in the world. Every brick, every plant, every salary, all provided by the community. If you ever visit, once the goose bumps recede and the tears dry, you will also be a volunteer and part of this community.

The dominant tree in the six-acre Freedom Park is sugar hackberry (*Celtis laevigata*). I was originally asked to inspect the trees and assess risk (before TRAQ) by the Gardening Volunteers of South Texas (GVST), who volunteer at the gardens every Tuesday. (You do not have to be a member. If you show up on Tuesday, they will put you to work). So with hackberry, construction, and the military designing support systems, we had some serious conditions. I forced the issue with my boss and we quickly got a crew on site to remove a couple of high risk hackberries and to prune a lot of large dead branches. The crews loved it because we got there on a Tuesday and the GVST volunteers moved all the brush to the chipper. They also got to meet some of the warriors and their wives and kids and grandparents. They dried some tears.

Ed, my boss, was not too happy about another volunteer project. So the next inspection, I made sure I was not available and asked him to cover for me. After the tears dried and the goose flesh was gone, he informed us that WFSC was a priority job to be moved to the top of the list anytime they needed anything. Anything, anytime, whatever they need.

We spend no money for advertising. We put our entire advertising budget into volunteer support of worthy programs. Although not our intention, more business is generated from this volunteer activity than we could possibly receive from money spent on advertising. Every person, every group we assist becomes a sales rep for us. I almost never have an appointment anymore with a potential new client that is not a referral. And unlike the 1 in 10 sales generated by advertising, almost 100 percent become clients. The client is sold before I arrive. They just want to know what they should do, how much it will cost and how soon we can get started.

Consider volunteering your time and work crews. It is very satisfying for you and your crews to do something that makes you feel so good. It is amazing how it can increase your sales and profit and reduce the work load on you and your sales staff. A real win/win for you and for the cause you support. ■



## NEW MEMBERS JANUARY-MARCH

Pamela Abee-Taulli	Austin	Carl Fiss	Spring	Thomas Paine	San Antonio
Jerome Alder	Cedar Park	Tyler Froberg	Pearland	Federico Partida	Pflugerville
Patrick Anderson	Charlotte	Christopher Garza	Houston	Richard Peraino	Corpus Christi
Trudy Bahr	San Antonio	Paul Goodman	San Antonio	Tony Poncik	Laverna
Kurt Beilharz	Dallas	John Gurasich	Austin	Pablo Ramirez	Dallas
Erik Belcher	Houston	Taylor Guynes	College Station	Sharon Reed	San Antonio
Richard Bewley	Tulsa	William Hajdik	Sugar Land	Alejandro Reyes	Austin
Cory Bird	North Richland Hills	Ronald Hall	Mesquite	Ron Richison	Austin
Joseph Booth	College Station	Randall Henderson	Bullard	Billy Roberts	Springtown
Brad Bradsher	Austin	Theresa Hicks Jackson	Little Elm	Shohn Rodgers	Garland
David Brantley	Fairview	Eduardo Jasso	Baytown	Val Roming	Eddy
Andrew Breitbarth	Waco	Cameron Johnson	Allen	Robert Ross	Midland
Kyle Brigham	San Antonio	Cam Joslin	Conroe	Shawn Schlachter	Houston
Nathan Brummer	Round Rock	Gary Kazee	Harker Heights	Kirsten Schneider	Austin
Robert Brundrett	Manvel	Simon Kenyon	Austin	Jerry Seaman	Lubbock
Rodrigo Caballero	Austin	Shane Kistner	Austin	Joseph Soileau	Kyle
Robey Canaday Jr	Dallas	Amy Langbein	Dallas	Joey Soileau	Kyle
Jorge Cantu	Edinburg	Paul Lara	Round Rock	Keith Swallers	Rosenberg
Samuel Cantu	Austin	Theodore Lathey	Lubbock	Lori Tracy	Dallas
Joseph Castille	Austin	Craig Lenocker	Coppell	Scott Tucker	Amarillo
Clay Chaote	Argyle	Josh Leonard	Ore City	Kenneth Turner	Duncanville
Mark Clampitt	Dallas	George Leszkowicz	McLean, VA	Trent Upchurch	Bedias
Jorge Colom	Houston	Billy Leverett Jr.	Corrigan	A. Urbina	Grand Junction, CO
Justin Cox	Mc Kinney	Nathan Lierly	Collinsville	Ashton Walden	Lubbock
Mark Cuellar	San Antonio	Bill Long	Midwest City, OK	Tina Waliczek-Cade	San Marcos
Jeremiah Davis	Dallas	Gumecindo Lopez	Austin	John Waters	El Paso
Jonathan Davis	Amarillo	Andrew Machuca	Temple	Alex Wallace	Dallas
Travis DeBaun	Austin	Chuck McLellan	Austin	Jenny Wallgren	Austin
Daniel Duncum	Tyler	Scott McManigal	Austin	Richard Williams	Salt Lake City
Kevin Farmer	Leander	Alex Montoya	Austin	Ross Womack	Bryan
Jason Fischer	Schertz	James Neeser	Forest Lake, MN	Lu Zhang	Spring
		Wade Ninemire	Austin		



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▶ See the video



# Updating our Knowledge of Cedar Trees and Fire

by Don Gardner, Registered Consulting Arborist #438,  
Certified Arborist TX0228

It is very important that people keep a perspective when deciding whether to remove cedars (ashe junipers) when they are concerned about wildfires.

Removing dead trees, removing dead wood on the ground, thinning cedar thickets, and pruning up old cedars are all essential elements of fire safety.

However removing healthy, large or old-growth cedars is based on a misunderstanding of cedars' place in the natural history of Central Texas. Removing them helps destroy the critical ecological balance of the Balcones Escarpment and the many environmental benefits of ashe juniper.

There is a strong old cultural bias against cedars based on out-of-date information. For decades there was a popular belief that cedars "are water hogs that suck up all the water from other plants," and "they are not native."

Renewed research in this century blasts both notions. The truth is that all western junipers in North America have compact root systems and are, in fact water thrifty. Among others, Texas A&M University researchers now say that Hill Country live oaks use substantially more water than cedars.

As far as native or not is concerned, I find two to three hundred year old junipers in our region. Most of these are found in isolated canyons (the native habitat of ashe juniper) but I find them regularly in yards and pastures.

After the cow era in Central Texas (1700-1970) overgrazed the region, causing massive erosion and top-soil loss, the canyon

cedars moved out onto the open ground. There was perhaps no other plant available that could germinate on bare caliche and limestone and multiply like cedars did to begin covering and restoring abused land. In forestry they would be called a "pioneer" species.

Cedars did their new job very well and we all owe them a debt of gratitude for their amazing ability to build top soil under their branches from needle cast and pave the way for our other natives to regain a foothold.

Cedars are responsible for kick starting the natural reforestation process that has boomed since the 1970s in Central Texas.

Certainly Central Texas faces substantial fire threats from areas that have gotten overgrown. Those particular areas should be targeted and, if on private property, grants should be given for selective thinning, firewise management and forest restoration.

As a general rule, all single-trunk cedars 15 inches in diameter or larger should be retained and pruned up. ■



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Greg David, RCA/BCMA  
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## What's the Big Idea?

Can you identify this native Texas tree?



If you know this tree, correctly identify it on our facebook page. If you don't know it, check the page for the answer in a few days. *Hint: winter showoff.*

Last Big Idea winner



David Richardson correctly identified our last BigIdea tree: Texas pinyon (or papershell pinyon), *Pinus remota*.





# COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF TREE PLANTING CHALLENGE

The first ever College Football Playoff Tree Planting Challenge was held the week before the game at High Oak Park in Arlington, site of the championship game.



First place  
winners:  
Ohio State.

Contestants from the University of Ohio and The University of Oregon were invited to compete, along with almost 20 universities from Texas! Several of the universities that participated have Tree Campus USA designations. This designation is very similar to the well-known Tree City USA program, except it is geared toward college campuses instead of municipalities. (<http://www.arborday.org/programs/treecampususa/>). Participants Ohio State, Dallas Baptist and Brookhaven College are all designated as Tree Campus USA.



Each team was timed on planting 10 trees and planting them correctly. Judges were watching for penalties such as planting too deep, improper mulching, poor root ball handling, etc. In the end it was no contest, as the team from Ohio State University ran away with first place. They completed planting all 10 of their trees correctly before any other team had even finished five!

Matt Grubisich with the Texas Trees Foundation explains the rules and proper planting procedures to the contestants.

Several TFS employees participated in the event, including Associate Director Bill Oates, Forest Health Manager Ron Billings, Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator Paul Johnson, Staff Forester Gretchen Riley, and Regional Urban Foresters Courtney Blevins (Ft. Worth) and Richard Leon (Dallas).

– Courtney Blevins, CF, CA, Regional Forester, Texas A&M Forest Service, Ft. Worth Region



Paul Johnson, Urban and Community Forestry Coordinator, Texas A&M Forest Service; Shawn Moore, Community Affairs Director, College Football Playoff; Janette Monear, President, Texas Trees Foundation; Robert Cluck, Mayor of Arlington; Jack Groh, Director, NFL Environmental Program; Lemuel Randolph, Director, Arlington Parks and Recreation.



*Bastrop replanting continues . . .*

## 1,766 seedlings planted on February work day

*by Rachel Hagan*

James Hagan with dibble bar next to newly planted loblolly.



At a February 7 tree planting at Bastrop State Park, our group of around 30 volunteers planted 1,766 seedlings— the largest number planted by a group so far this season. With all the other planting dates throughout the winter, the ongoing replanting effort is amazing.

This is the third year the park has hosted volunteer reforestation opportunities following the 2011 Bastrop County Complex Wildfire. The wildfire affected 96 percent of Bastrop State Park.

The park provides several weekends of tree planting open to the public between December and February. Volunteers receive safety and planting demonstrations. You can sign up through Volunteer Match ([www.volunteermatch.org/search/org757352.jsp](http://www.volunteermatch.org/search/org757352.jsp)). In addition, Tree Folks coordinates private property plantings and seedling giveaways in Bastrop.

When we were near the road people honked, waved and said “Thank you.” It is still sad to look at the devastation when you are in the park and in Bastrop. At the same time, all the work being done by everyone to bring back the lost pines is an inspiration. A walk through the trails gives you a close up of the re-growth and renewal that is happening. ■



Matt and Adri Hagan pause on the trail next to a loblolly which germinated from seed after the fire.



Matt Hagan plants a loblolly.



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# What Is Killing Scattered Pine Trees In East Texas?

by H. A. (Joe) Pase III, Texas A&M Forest Service Retired

As I traveled around East Texas this past fall, I noticed numerous, scattered dying or dead pine trees as evidenced by their red or brown needles. These trees may be in the forest, along the roadside, or in urban settings. Many people have asked what is causing this. So, let's address it.

First, let me make it clear. This is NOT the dreaded southern pine beetle (SPB), the most destructive forest insect in the southern United States. The SPB, capable of killing large areas of pine timber, has not been found in East Texas since 1997. We hope this trend continues.

The scattered pine trees we see dying now are being attacked and killed by different pine bark beetles commonly called pine engraver beetles. There are actually three different species of engraver beetles (also called Ips beetles), but they all behave in a similar way. Typically, engraver beetles begin infesting the top of the tree and work their way down to the mid and lower bole (trunk). The classic symptom of their attack is yellow or red needles in the upper half or so of the crown of the tree; needles on the lower branches may still be green. Eventually, however, all the needles in the crown will turn red. By the time a homeowner or landowner notices the attack (usually red needles), it is too late to save the tree. When all the needles are red, the tree is dead.

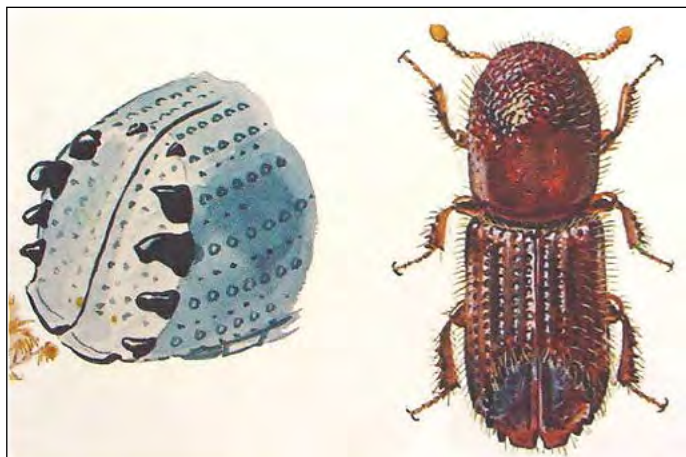
Engraver beetles are quite small (about  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{3}{16}$  inches long; see drawing) and brown to dark brown in color. They fly from a tree they have killed to find a new host tree to attack and they only attack pine trees. It is impossible to predict which tree or trees they will attack next. Engraver beetles won't attack healthy trees; rather, they select weakened or stressed trees to attack. Unfortunately, these weakened trees are very difficult for a person to identify as they seldom exhibit any external symptoms. In urban settings, it is common to see pine trees attacked by engraver beetles following construction of a new house where soil-disturbing activities have damaged roots

and thus weakened the tree. Also, Ips beetles tend to attack scattered trees in a forest stand that has been disturbed by logging (such as thinning), since this activity disturbs the roots of residual trees. In a forest situation, the tree mortality caused by Ips beetles is usually scattered and involves relatively few trees, especially when one considers the entire stand. When these beetles select a tree in your yard to attack, it can be very expensive to have the dead tree removed. In a forest situation, removal of the dead trees is usually not economically feasible because of the scattered pattern of dead trees. Also, felling Ips-killed trees in the forest is not necessary and does not provide any control. For a photo essay about Ips, see the first link at the end of this article.

When the beetles find a suitable host tree, they will land on the bark surface and bore (chew) a small hole in the bark so they can enter the cambium area between the bark and the wood. They do not bore into the wood of the tree. They mate, lay eggs, and feed in the cambium. This process basically girdles the tree under the bark and causes the tree to die. It is common for the beetles to kill one or two trees and move on, leaving other nearby pine trees unattacked.

The engraver beetle activity we are seeing now is most likely related to the typical late summer and early fall drought that is common in East Texas. Even though 2014 has seen generally adequate rainfall across East Texas, there have been periods of fairly dry weather. There could even be some residual stress carried over from the 2011 drought from which selected trees have not fully recovered. Fire, hail, ice, lightning, wind, standing water, disease, logging, construction, and other factors also may make pine trees more susceptible to engraver beetle attacks.

How can these beetles be controlled? Unfortunately once engraver beetles infest a tree, it can seldom be saved. Treating a tree with insecticides after the needles have turned yellow or red won't save the tree. Also, spraying the bark surface of a tree to prevent Ips attack is not practical or very effective. Because it is impossible to know beforehand which tree the beetles will attack, spraying all the trees in your yard or forest to prevent attacks is not recommended. In addition, the entire bark surface from the crown to the ground needs to be covered with spray in order to be effective. This is difficult to achieve, and in urban areas there is concern about spray drifting onto neighboring property. A new systemic insecticide, sold under the trade name TREE-äge® has proven effective for protecting high-value pine trees from engraver beetle attack. But TREE-äge®, containing the active ingredient emamectin benzoate, is a restricted-use pesticide. This means only a certified pesticide applicator can purchase or apply this chemical, and injections must be repeated every few years at relatively high cost for prolonged protection. The best approach to preventing an Ips beetle problem, especially in the urban environment, is to keep your ►



Drawing of an Ips beetle (greatly enlarged) showing the short spines on the rear of the beetle.



pine trees as healthy as possible. This includes deep watering during dry periods and avoiding damage to the tree's roots. As already stated, in a forest situation control is not recommended.

A few closing comments are in order. After a pine tree dies, it is common to hear a "chewing" or "crunching" sound coming from the tree. Many people believe this is noise made by the pine beetles, but that is not correct. Pine beetles are so small their chewing cannot be heard. The chewing noise is actually made by the larvae or grubs of a large beetle commonly called a sawyer beetle or longhorned wood borer. These beetles infest a tree soon after it dies (they do not kill the tree) and the larvae initially feed in the cambium but eventually bore into the solid wood. As the larvae feed, they make the chewing sound commonly heard. Many East Texans are familiar with the larvae of this beetle as they can be found under the loose bark of recently killed pine trees and are often collected for fish bait.

As cooler temperatures and typical winter rainfall begin to occur in East Texas, Ips activity should diminish. Hopefully, most of the tree mortality has already occurred (at least for this year).

Another situation not related to pine beetles also occurs in the fall. Pine trees will often exhibit small branches or tufts of needles that turn yellow or red scattered through the crown. This is NOT a sign that Ips beetles are beginning to attack. This is natural and normal and not harmful to the tree. When Ips beetles attack, *all* the needles on several branches will turn from green to yellow to red.

Finally, for forest landowners, don't panic when you see a few scattered trees dying in your stand. Engraver beetles are probably at work, but their impact on the total stand is typically very small. Don't think you must harvest your entire stand because you are going to lose it to the beetles. Typically, all or most of your trees will not be killed by Ips beetles. If there is ever any doubt or question, contact a qualified forester or your nearest Texas A&M Forest Service office for assistance and guidance.

For more details, please refer to the following Texas A&M Forest Service websites:

<http://texasforests.service.tamu.edu/main/popup.aspx?id=3398> (photographic evidence of Ips attacks)

[http://texasforests.service.tamu.edu/uploadedFiles/FRDSF/FMIS/Ips\\_Bark\\_Beetle.pdf](http://texasforests.service.tamu.edu/uploadedFiles/FRDSF/FMIS/Ips_Bark_Beetle.pdf) ■



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## Q. What's Black and White and Read All Over?

## A. Steve Houser's Opinion Piece on the Dallas Tree Ordinance



To find out more about Steve's latest battle on behalf of tree protection and preservation, please read his piece on the opinion page of the *Dallas Morning News*. You can find it at:

<http://www.dallasnews.com/opinion/latest-columns/20150127-steve-houser-dallas-tree-ordinance-apparently-is-not-a-priority.ece>

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# Un Ejemplo Correcto de la Técnica “Entresaca”

por Micah Pace, Miembro de la Junta Directiva de ISAT y Arbolista con Preservation Tree Services

En la arboricultura hay varias técnicas para mantener los árboles en buen estado. Una de ellas es la entresaca o “thinning” como se dice en inglés. El objetivo de esa técnica es la reducción del volumen interno de la copa del árbol. ¿Cuáles son los beneficios de esta importante técnica?

Primero la reducción del volumen de la copa reduce el peso de la copa y ayuda a que se desarrolle una estructura más resistente y segura especialmente durante épocas ventosas para evitar el quebrantamiento de las ramas. Segundo la entresaca reduce el desarrollo de hongos sobre el forraje de la copa de los árboles ya que el viento ayuda evitar que la humedad se quede en las hojas. Otro beneficio de esta técnica es que más luz puede pasar al suelo y eso ayuda a mantener el

césped del patio. Además la entresaca mejora la vista estética del árbol ayudando a mejorar la apariencia de la propiedad.

Las fotos muestran el mismo árbol antes y después de la entresaca. Es fácil ver como estaba tan denso el árbol en la primera foto y en la segunda el árbol está más abierto y limpio dando a la propiedad una apariencia mantenida.

No todos los árboles requieren una entresaca. Normalmente un árbol joven o recién sembrado no va a necesitar la técnica entre los primeros 5 años. Sin embargo árboles más establecidos o maduros pueden beneficiarse de esa forma de mantenimiento. También hay una diferencia entre las especies por la arquitectura de sus copas. Algunos de ellos tienen copas naturalmente abiertas tal como el olmo americano (American elm) mientras otros tal como el encino (live oak) tienen una corona muy densa que requiere una entresaca más frecuente.

Hay varias técnicas en la arboricultura y cada una de ellas pueden ayudar a cumplir ciertas metas para lograr un buen mantenimiento de los árboles o propiedad. Es muy importante tener un plan bien definido para proveer y dar mejor servicios

a los clientes pero sobre todo hay que escoger la técnica más apropiada para las necesidades de los árboles.

Saludos y  
cuidense mucho. ■



▲ Antes de la entresaca



Después de la entresaca ►



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Photo: Brian Bixler. Arborist: J. David Driver (the X man).

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## *The eagle has landed...*

A cypress eagle, carved by Craig Johnson of Custom Design Artworks, is on display at the New Braunfels Public Library.

The wood was from a bald cypress tree in Landa Park on the Comal River in New Braunfels. The head and tail are sapwood, lighter in color.

The piece took 60 hours to carve. It was begun during the Texas Tree Climbing Championship in Landa Park in May, 2014 as a demonstration piece celebrating trees, wood, and new life from dead wood. It was sponsored by Arborilogical Services, Inc.

The eagle is temporarily located in the New Braunfels Public Library until the New Braunfels Arts Commission can find a permanent public display area.

– Thanks to Kelly Eby, Urban Forester, New Braunfels, for news item and photo

